

But, if it isn't the case, if we aren't going to save money, if the local school districts aren't going to be able to take care of these kids, if we're going to have to send some of them out-of-state, does it make sense to close the school? Well, that's what you're really arguing for, if you argue against this amendment, because all I'm saying is that certain conditions would need to be met in order to close the school, conditions that I understand to be the case and what is planned on at this point. I've discussed this with the Director of the Department of Social Services, Mary Dean Harvey. And as I understand it, I know she doesn't like this particular language, but at the same time understands and can abide by it and doesn't feel threatened by it, and she shouldn't, because this is an attempt to set in the intent language of this budget bill what we expect to be the case, if that facility is closed. And I don't see why there should be a problem meeting this test if we want to proceed with closing that school, because that's what I understood the case to be all along. As far as precedent setting, I don't know that this is a bad precedent. Before we take the step of closing down a program or a facility, we ought to know why we're doing it, and be sure that that is, in fact, what's going to occur, that we have to have some accountability here before we take some steps. Now Senator Bernard-Stevens talked about Curtis and how the regents said, we'll cut it, and then we didn't back them up, and they started it up again, and I admit that was a bad situation, and I'm disappointed that that occurred. Good example for that side. Let me give you some other examples from the other side. We talked about, one of my first years down here, I don't see Senator Peterson, we talked about closing the Norfolk Regional Center down, didn't need it anymore, 1979, 1980, right around there. I was on the Health Committee. We studied it carefully. We found out that the administrator that wanted to shut it down without legislative involvement was dead wrong. Not only did we need that facility, we've expanded the facility. Not only did we not close it down, we've added to the work load that they have because it is so vital to our meeting the needs of the mentally ill. Now it's great to back up administrators, and we need to. On cases like Curtis, that was a mistake. But in other cases administrators have got to also understand there is an accountability. And by saying this is what we expect to be the case before you close the school down, we are holding accountable the situation with the administration on this decision. In addition, I remember another case where the university tried to close down the Lincoln nursing program. They didn't like the program. And there are other examples.